



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8**

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AUG 26 2010

Ref: EPR-N

Western Area Power Administration
Attention: Lana Reilly
P.O. Box 281213
Lakewood, CO 80228-8213

RE: Prairie Winds Project Final Environmental
Impact Statement
CEQ#20100282

Dear Ms. Reilly:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 8 has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the South Dakota Prairie Winds Project (Project) pursuant to our responsibilities and authority under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. Section 4321, et seq., and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 7609.

Our review found the FEIS addresses many of EPA's concerns noted with the Draft EIS. We appreciate the development of the discussion related to cumulative impacts associated with this project. These considerations, in connection with your consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, show a good effort to address these issues. In particular we commend your consideration toward protecting wetlands (both jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional) in the project area. Your commitment to avoid wetlands will ensure these areas are protected both during construction activities and long-term. We recommend the Record Of Decision (ROD) require the construction contractor to avoid all wetlands and sensitive areas during their work, including during crane walks, and that it also describe how such requirements will be overseen or enforced.

The FEIS states that the construction contractor will be required to have a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in place prior to construction. Please note that the SWPPP regulations as implemented by the State of South Dakota, require the owner of a facility to obtain the requisite permit authorization. The State also outlines requirements through which they will close permit coverage once "Final Stabilization" has been achieved. As such, we suggest the ROD include language outlining how the Applicant will comply with the State's construction stormwater permit and the SWPPP requirements. We also recommend the ROD outline how roads and other project area features will be maintained to minimize or prevent erosion and/or stormwater runoff throughout the life of the project.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at 303-312-6004 or you may contact the lead reviewer for this FEIS, Gina Cristiano, of my staff at 303-312-6688.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Larry Svoboda', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Larry Svoboda
Director, NEPA Compliance and Review Program
Ecosystems Protection and Remediation

cc: Dennis Rankin, Rural Utilities Service

